

THE VALLEY

ADVENT 2025 NEWSLETTER



Valley Community Presbyterian Church

OPEN HEARTS • OPEN MINDS • OPENING LIVES TO GOD

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Golden Valley, MN 55422



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Cover Photo: In November we celebrated the baptism of Baby Liam! Mom, Dad, big sister Olivia, and the entire Valley community pledged to support Liam in this journey.

Community News

• **MARK YOUR CALENDAR!**

- **Advent in the Valley continues (see pages 5 for all the details!)**
 - Sunday, December 7 @ 9:30 AM | Second Sunday in Advent: **PEACE**
 - Sunday, December 14 @ 9:30 AM | Third Sunday in Advent: **JOY (Pageant Sunday)**
 - Pastoral Candidate Kyle Sandison will be at Valley (page 4)
 - Congregational Meeting following worship (page 4)
 - Sunday, December 21 @ 9:30 AM | Fourth Sunday in Advent: **LOVE**
 - Cookie Exchange @ 11:00 AM
 - Longest Night Service @ 4:30 PM
 - Wednesday, December 24 - Christmas Eve
 - Family Service @ 4:30 PM (Music begins at 4:15 PM)
 - Candlelight Service @ 9:30 PM (Communion will be served.)
- **Valley Office will be closed on December 25 and 26 in observation of Christmas**
- Pastor Jim's Last Sunday and Thank You Brunch | Sunday, December 28 (page 6)
- Valley Office will be closed on January 1 in observation of New Years Day
- **Fridays in the Valley (page 6)**
 - Friday, January 9 @ 7 PM | Artu Duo
 - Friday, February 13 @ 7 PM | Momoko Tanno (soprano) with Joseph Hagedorn (lute/guitar)

• **MISSION OPPORTUNITIES**

- **Alternative Gift Catalogue (page 5)**
 - Consider giving the gift of change this holiday season!
- **Donate Blood | Sunday, January 4 | 12:00 - 4:00 PM** [click here](#) to register.
 - Valley will now be a recurring Memorial Blood Centers donation site! (page 6)
- **'Sugarcane' Film Screening | Sunday, January 18 | 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM (page 6)**
- **Habitat for Humanity Work Day (page 6)**
 - Monday, January 19 | 8:30 AM - 3:30 PM
- **NEEDED Meals on Wheels Drivers call the Church Office if you can volunteer.**
- More updates from our Task Forces and committees coming in the January newsletter

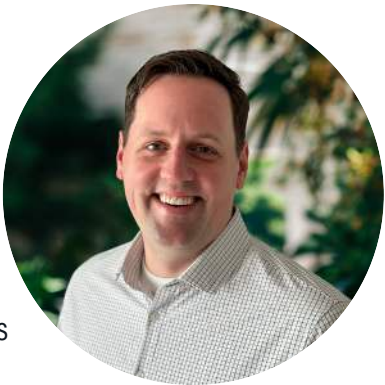
A LETTER FROM THE PASTOR

ADVENT 2025

Dear Valley,

Often in Advent you will hear pastors talk about it being “the season of expectant hope.” I tend to use that kind of language as well because it cuts to the core of what Advent stands for: waiting for what God has promised to us. We are reminded of that promise when we hear the words of Isaiah to open the season: “For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders, and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace” (9:6). To those who heard his words millennia ago, they were filled with hope of a reunified nation and a promised home, but what does that mean to us, today?

When I first took on this role nearly two years ago, I can now say that no one fully knew what to expect. I didn't know anyone, nor did anyone know me. Unforeseen moments waited ahead for us: creative thinking demanded by building renovations, grief from the deaths of beloved members of the Valley Family, and great joys of baptisms and new members. No matter what presented itself on



Rev. Jim Cochrane

this path we've trod together, it has been encountered as a community rooted in hope, peace, joy, and love.

In everything we do, we trust in the promises of God and the community around us to see us through. And we are transformed into something incredible when we look for – and expect – God's inbreaking in our lives. I cannot think of a better way to spend the Advent season with Valley than to sing the carols we love, celebrate the time we have had together, and look as a community to what God has promised for this faith community and for the world around us.



In November, Valley welcomed two new members, Jenny (left) and Kirk (right). Kirk's wife Nina (center) joined them up front during worship.

The world was forever transformed thousands of years ago when the Christ Child was born in a stable. Emmanuel, God With Us, came to walk among us and show us God's promised future, and similarly spurred us to action. God has always appeared for God's people to lead them into new chapters and call them to new, incredible things, and I am excited to see what lays ahead for Valley.

I am beyond grateful for my time here in the Valley: the laughter we have shared, the love you have given me and my family, and you welcoming me into the holiest moments of your lives. I look forward to standing with you as we welcome God Incarnate into the world in just a couple of weeks, and as we live into the hope that we have all been given. Happy Advent, and Merry Christmas!

Peace to You,



STEWARDSHIP 2026

LAST CALL FOR GIVING COMMITMENTS: DECEMBER 21, 2025

The Valley Session is in the process of finalizing the 2026 budget, and approximately 85% of Valley's 2026 budget income is derived from stewardship giving. As a result, the stewardship goal for the current campaign has been set at just over \$406,000. To date, we have received giving commitments totaling roughly 82% of this goal!

There are still many giving commitments outstanding, but we are on track to reach our Stewardship goal. We will not get there without everyone's contribution! Will you help us by making sure you've sent us your 2026 giving commitment?

Whether you make a giving commitment or defer at this time, please contact Chelsie Larsen at chelsie.larsen@valleychurch.net of your intention by December 21, 2025.

By your response we will know that you have taken the time to discern how you are called to support Valley in the coming year.

Don't forget! If you have set up to give automatically through your Breeze account, you will need to sign in and update your giving amount for the coming year!

INTRODUCING PASTORAL CANDIDATE **KYLE SANDISON**

Kyle Sandison grew up in Grand Rapids, Michigan, attended Calvin University, then moved east to work at New City Kids, an after-school center in Jersey City, New Jersey. He then served at City Grace Church, a church plant in lower Manhattan, where he met his wife, Hanne.

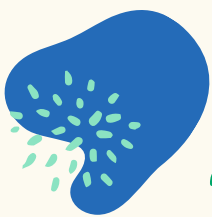
After several years in New York, Hanne and Kyle moved to Boston so Hanne could attend law school while Kyle completed his M.Div. from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. After their first daughter, Elsie, was born, they decided to move to Minnesota to be closer to family (and the State Fair). They now have three children: Elsie (6) loves playing with friends, Arik (4) loves animals (especially giraffes), and Ingrid (1) just learned to walk (!). Kyle enjoys music, reading, coffee, and having his hopes raised and dashed by his favorite Minnesota sports teams.



Since graduating from seminary, Kyle has served in various ministry settings in New Jersey, Louisiana, and Minnesota, in roles ranging from Director of Worship to Lead Pastor. Through these experiences he's discovered a passion for helping build strong and deep relationships within the church and surrounding community.

Kyle sees the church as God's beloved community: "It's the community in which we're beloved by God, cherished by one another, and invited to share God's love with the world around us." For Kyle, this means the church is a place of welcome and belonging, a community that seeks justice and works for the flourishing of all people, and lives into the hope and joy that God is renewing all things. What excites him most about pastoral ministry is walking with people in their faith journey, helping people encounter God's beauty and mystery, and watching a community grow deeper together in our identity as God's beloved.

Kyle and his family are thrilled about the opportunity to call Valley their home church, and they look forward to meeting everyone and getting to be a part of the community.



IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT **MEETING THE CANDIDATE & THE CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**



- A **Meet & Greet** with the candidate and his family will be held on **Saturday, December 13th from 4:30 - 6:00 PM**. Come to Valley to meet the candidate while we enjoy some light refreshments and fellowship together. Meet & Greet will be held in the Cornerstone Room.
 - *Please note that the PRISM Holiday Toy Shoppe will be wrapping up during this time. Attendees are encouraged to enter using the upstairs doors.*
- Candidate will participate in the **worship** service on **Sunday, December 14th at 9:30 AM**
- **Congregational Meeting** will be held **immediately following worship** with the purpose of hearing and acting upon the report of the PNC to elect a new Head Pastor/Head of Staff for Valley Community Presbyterian Church.
 - Members are encouraged to attend in-person but if that is not possible, there will be an option to join the meeting virtually via zoom. An email will be sent out next Wednesday, December 10 with a registration link.

Advent in the Valley

ADVENT 2025 SCHEDULE



Sunday, Dec. 7		9:30 AM	2nd Sunday of Advent
		5:30 PM	All-Church Christmas Dinner
		7:00 PM	Fridays in the Valley Tuba Christmas Concert
Sunday, Dec. 14		9:30 AM	3rd Sunday of Advent Christmas Pageant Sunday
Sunday, Dec. 21		9:15 AM	4th Sunday of Advent Christmas Music Sunday
		11:00 AM	Christmas Cookie Exchange
			Sign up in the Fellowship Hall or contact Katie Decker
		4:30 PM	Longest Night Service Soup supper to follow
Wednes., Dec. 24		4:30 PM	Christmas Eve Family Service (music starts at 4:15 pm)
		9:30 PM	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service with communion

Christmas in the Valley

IN-PERSON & LIVE-STREAM

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2025

- 4:30 PM - Christmas Eve Family Service (music starts at 4:15 pm)
- 9:30 PM - Christmas Eve Candlelight Service with communion



PRISM TOY SHOPPE

The **PRISM Holiday Toy Shoppe** will be held at Valley again this year and we could not be more excited! The Holiday Toy Shoppe provides families and guardians with the opportunity to "shop" for new gifts for each of their children. While you are doing your holiday shopping, please keep PRISM kids in mind! Here's a list of popular gifts:

- ACTION FIGURES
- TODDLER TOYS
- SPORTS ATTIRE
- TEEN GIFTS (HEADPHONES, GAMING KEYBOARDS, HAIR TOOLS, SLIPPERS)
- BLANKETS
- GIFT CARDS (AMAZON, TARGET, VISA)
- NERF TOYS
- LEGOS
- GAMES



**DROP OFF GIFTS AT VALLEY BY
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7!**

ALTERNATIVE GIFT CATALOG

This year, as every year, we invite you to consider the **VCPC Alternative Gift Catalog** when beginning your holiday shopping. Donations will be made on the behalf of your gift recipient to one of our community partners. You will then receive a card and informative insert to give to them, telling them about the organization. It's a gift that can have a powerful ripple effect throughout our community and our world.

Stop by the table in the Fellowship Hall or talk to Arlene Freeberg to learn more.

- LOOKING AHEAD - FRIDAYS IN THE VALLEY

FRIDAY, January 9 | 7:00 pm
Artu Duo
FRIDAY, February 13 | 7:00 pm
Momoko Tanno, soprano with
Joseph Hagedorn, lute/guitar
FRIDAY, March 13 | 7:00 pm
Pazzaluna Chamber Players
FRIDAY, April 10 | 7:00 pm
Solerna Wind Quintet
FRIDAY, May 8 | 7:00 pm
The Paper Clips
FRIDAY, June 12 | 7:00 pm
The Marimba Bullies

FREE-WILL OFFERINGS BENEFIT
LOCAL COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

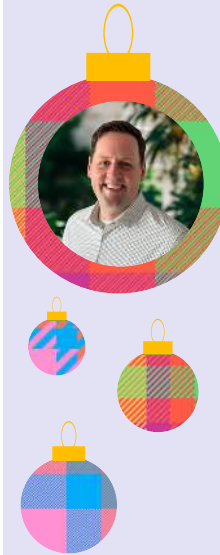
A THANK YOU BRUNCH FOR PASTOR JIM

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28 FOLLOWING WORSHIP

Join us for a potluck brunch following worship on December 28th (Jim's Last Sunday) to celebrate Pastor Jim's time with us at Valley and his dedicated care and leadership of our community.

RSVPs are not necessary, but please sign up if you would like to bring something to contribute to the potluck!

Sign up for a
potluck item in the
Fellowship Hall or
scan the QR code:



Valley will now be a recurring Memorial Blood Centers donation site!

Mark your calendars
for the following dates
and spread the word!

VALLEY COMMUNITY BLOOD DRIVE

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN
DONATING BLOOD AT VALLEY?

Sunday
January 4, 2026
12:00 - 4:00 PM

January 4th, 2026

March 8th, 2026

May 10th, 2026

July 12th, 2026

September 6th, 2026

November 8th, 2026

Scan to Register for 1/4/26



Valley Community

SUGARCANE

JOIN THE FAITH COMMUNITY SCREENING TOUR

The VCPC Indigenous Justice Task Force invites you to a screening of the award-winning film "Sugarcane" at Valley Community Presbyterian Church!

Sunday, January 18, 2026 | 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM



SUGARCANEFILM.COM

Habitat for Humanity

MONDAY, JANUARY 19, 2026: MLK JR. DAY



12 VOLUNTEERS NEEDED
8:30 AM - 3:30 PM

Sign up in the Fellowship Hall
contact **Andrew Pitan** or **Valley** with questions

2026 OFFERING ENVELOPES

PICK UP AT CHURCH

MONDAY - FRIDAY 8 AM - 4 PM
OR ON SUNDAYS

Help the church save on
postage by picking up your
envelope box.

CALENDAR

Join us for coffee and donuts on Sundays following Worship in Fellowship Hall.

Saturday, December 6

2:00 pm Pageant Rehearsal

Sunday, December 7 - Communion Sunday
Second Sunday of Advent: PEACE

9:30 am Worship Service

5:30 pm Christmas Dinner

7:00 pm Fridays in the Valley

Tuesday, December 9

1:00 pm Bible Fellowship

6:30 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal

Saturday, December 13

All Day - PRISM Holiday Toy Shoppe

2:00 pm Pageant Rehearsal

4:30 pm Pastoral Candidate Meet & Greet

Sunday, December 14 - Pageant Sunday
Third Sunday in Advent: JOY

9:30 am Worship Service

10:30 am Congregational Meeting

Tuesday, December 16

11:30 am Valley Men's Luncheon

1:00 pm Bible Fellowship

6:30 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal

Wednesday, December 17

7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, December 18

10:00 am Meals on Wheels

Sunday, December 21 - Christmas Music Sunday
Fourth Sunday in Advent: LOVE

9:30 am Worship Service

10:45 am Cookie Exchange

4:30 pm Longest Night Service

Tuesday, December 23

1:00 pm Bible Fellowship

6:30 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal

Wednesday, December 24 - Christmas Eve

4:30 pm Christmas Eve Family Service

9:30 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service with communion

Thursday, December 25 - Christmas Day
Office Closed

Friday, December 26

Office Closed - Christmas Eve observed

Sunday, December 28

Pastor Jim's Last Sunday at Valley

9:30 am Worship Service

10:30 am Farewell Brunch for Pastor Jim

Tuesday, December 30

1:00 pm Bible Fellowship

6:30 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal

Wednesday, December 31 - New Year's Eve

Thursday, January 1

Office Closed - New Years Day observed

Sunday, January 4

9:30 am Worship Service

12:00 pm Memorial Centers Blood Drive @ Valley

Monday, January 5

11:30 am Lunch Bunch @ 50s Grill

BIRTHDAYS

Leigh Gautsche

Terry Goslinga

Jill Reiswig

Stephanie Toering-Peters

David Hole

Leo Kummer

Andrew Pitan

Melinda Marshall

Sydney Kara

Jennifer Malecha

Nikii Minter

Janet Biggs

Jim Tarbell

Sarah Willey

Eda Inman

William Chancellor

Kurt Modert

Pam Magill

Mary Rom

Marjorie Deutsch

Sheila Sheldon

Michael Craven

Rory Messer

Sharon Pleimling

Ellen Vannucci

Virginia Day

Cynthia Malinowski

Beverly Mattin

Evan Jurgensen

Chuck Ulmer

Heather Griffin

K Marshall

Dave McCunn

Theo Morrow

Sara Schiebout

Carrie Priem

John Chancellor

Madeline Lund

Andy Wandmacher

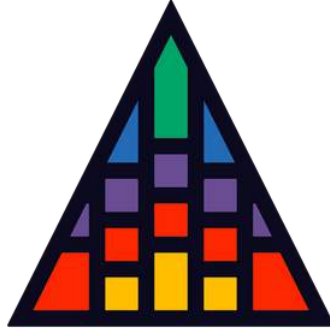
Marisol Freeberg

Betsy Malecha

Aubrey Soens

Brian Parks





Valley Community

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



VCPC

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT

As a faith congregation opening hearts, opening minds, and opening lives to God, Valley Community Presbyterian Church (VCPC) seeks to honor the important stories and lived experiences of its members and neighbors.

VCPC sits on the ancestral and contemporary land of the Dakota people, for whom the land holds historical, spiritual, political, and cultural significance.

We acknowledge the ongoing injustices that we have committed against the Dakota people and pledge to interrupt this legacy. We will educate ourselves about Indigenous history and recognize, support, and advocate for our Native neighbors.

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